22. Public Works.—By spending as much as Rs. 32,82,485 out of the allotment of Rs. 32,92,116 granted to the department in 1100, the Public Works Department has established a record. The permanent restoration, at a cost of more than Rs. 3 lakhs, of the roads and bridges damaged by the floods formed a special feature of the public works carried out during the period under review. The total expenditure on communications amounted to over 66 per cent. of the gross outlay on works and repairs ; and proportionately greater attention was devoted to the improvement of communications in North and Central Travancore. The number of miles of new communications opened throughout the State, including the conversion of traces and village paths into cart roads, was 200 and the number of miles of existing communications improved was 266. The expenditure on Protective Irrigation was Rs. 1,47,397, besides that of Rs. 98,986 on the Kodayar works. The rules relating to ryots' roads, which formed the subject of a non-official resolution in the Legislative Council, are being scrutinised with a view to removing practical difficulties in their operation. A combined scheme for the supply of drinking water and electric light to the town of Trivandrum from Aruvikkarai on the Karamanai river is before the Government and I am hopeful of proceeding with it very soon. The improvement of waterways and the restoration of minor irrigation and drainage works in the Trivandrum taluk and in Central and North Travancore are other schemes in contemplation. The Alleppey-Shertallai canal project has been definitely abandoned.

23. Ports.—Alleppey was suitable for shipping throughout the monsoon in 1100 and thus became an all-the-year port. This fortunate result was brought about by that unaccountable natural phenomenon, the mud bank or bed which, returning after many years, enveloped the port affording safe anchorage in still water irrespective of weather conditions. In these circumstances favourable to shipping the improvement of trade facilities became advisable. Several items of work were carried out at the pier the chief of which was the erection of steam derricks which have considerably helped the handling of goods. Tram lines were renewed, trucks replaced and defects in the pier remedied. Estimates have also now been received for important improvements to the sea-end of the Commercial Canal and the question of a boat-basin has been taken up. A proposal for a jetty at Quilon port is under examination. The provision of more godowns (warehouses) at Trivandrum port and suggestions for more inducements to shipping at this port are being considered.

24. Railways.—The field work for the preliminary survey of the Trivandrum-Nagercoil line, with an alternative alignment through Trivandrum town, has been completed ; and a report of a reconnaissance survey of a line from Quilon to Ernakulam has been obtained. After a detailed traffic survey of the districts affected, proposals have been advanced for the alignment of a main line from Quilon to Mavelikara, Chengannur to Kottayam and Ettumanur and thence direct *via* Talayolapparambu and Trippunittura to Ernakulam, with a wagon-ferry at an intermediate station, Pallam, linking the main line with Alleppey port. A branch line from Ettumanur to Mundakayam at the foot of the Peermade hills may perhaps be treated as an integral part of the project, while another branch from Trippunittura to Muvattupuzha running in the direction of Tattakad or to a point further up the Periyar may be feasible after the main line is completed, either as a feeder line or as part of a larger scheme for affording easy access from the High Range planting districts to the west coast ports. A coast line from Mavelikara *via* Alleppey to Cochin has also been proposed ; but the financial prospects of this can be judged only after seeing how Alleppey fares by the development of the Cochin harbour and how much of the main line traffic is likely to be retained by the waterways. These are all, of course, projects only under contemplation and much will depend upon the results of detailed surveys and other considerations.

Such surveys as have hitherto been undertaken were entrusted to a railway contractor who has been working in Travancore for several years. This gentleman, Mr. G. Marini, has from the 1st February 1926 been appointed for a term of five years as a whole-time Railway Engineer and Adviser to Government for Railways. Mr. Marini has a wide and intimate knowledge of railway matters and his long

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